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though the latter were not half fledged.\* A few years ago I saw a young bird supposed to be a young cuckoo, it was near the size of a young magpie, and of a dirty gray colour, of an orange cast about the mouth, it eat greedily, of almost any thing, and lived several days; whether it was really a young cuckoo or not I cannot determine, but its chirp and appearance differed from all others I ever saw: the earliest I have seen any of these birds was April 25; latest, June 29. Concerning the swallows, accounts are still more contradictory; in Sweden, Denmark, and other northern countries they are said to remain under water during winter, but that is certainly not the case here; Mr. Pennant supposes they mostly remain in the country, under ground, and mentions that in a cliff near Whitby, Yorkshire, on digging out a fox, whole bushels of swallows were found in a torpid state. A person of veracity also informs me of a similar case in the county of Antrim. Though I believe both these accounts coming from such a respectable source, I do not conceive it to be general with them to lay themselves up like insects, &c. (perhaps they were both of a particular species) as many proofs are that they generally leave the country†; swifts and martins retiring early in autumn, and the common swallow about the latter end of September. On the evening of the 28th September, last year, I observed a great number of swallows flying backwards and forwards, screaming in an unusual manner, which I suppose was a signal to collect their body, as next day not one was to be seen; myriads of the swallow kind are often seen traversing the straits of Gibraltar, from north to south, and from south to north, according to the season, also various sorts of hawks and kites;

\* As this is the only account I have seen of the cuckoos rearing their young, I would be glad if any of your correspondents could furnish any thing to elucidate the subject.

† Mr. Laskey, of Exeter, mentions seeing them setting off in vast numbers, steering a S.E. course.

they are said to keep as little as possible above the ocean, flying over the land: the following are the earliest and latest periods I observed them.

|           | First seen.                      | Last seen. |
|-----------|----------------------------------|------------|
| April 17, | Common swallow, . . . . .        | Sept. 28,  |
| 15,       | White rumped martin . . . . .    | 4,         |
| 23,       | Land rail first heard, . . . . . | Aug. 10,   |
| 25,       | Cuckoo first heard, . . . . .    | June 29,   |
| May 12,   | Swift, . . . . .                 | Sept. 2,   |

The land-rail, or corn-crake, is also said to migrate, which is somewhat more remarkable than of any of the former, it being a bird very unwilling to fly, and seemingly not well accommodated for long flights; they are said to retire to Spain, having been often caught lighting on ships in the channel and bay of Biscay; they commonly visit us about the beginning of May, the earliest I have heard them call was April 23, and latest August 10; I have however known them caught in fields about the roots of hedges several weeks after. I shall now conclude these remarks and extracts, hoping that some more successful observer will communicate his remarks on this subject. S.M.S.

C. Fergus.

For the Belfast Monthly Magazine.

#### A DIALOGUE ON TASTE.

Henry. MY dear Charles, how do you do? I have been seeking you. Where have you been?

Charles. I have just been paying a visit to Mrs. M. We had a most extraordinary dispute on the subject of taste, and we differed most completely.

Henry. How was that, Charles?

Charles. You know I have great pretensions to a taste in horses, and I was telling her that I had just given a very large sum of money for a very fine hunter.

Henry. And I suppose she condemned your extravagance.

Charles. She did, and laughed at what she called my folly.

Henry. I do not wonder at it.—How could a man of taste spend all his money on horses?

Charles. Why, Henry, I might as well ask you, how a man of taste could pay a thousand pounds, as you

did a few days ago, for *part* of the foot of a statue of Alcibiades' dog? or rather for what they told you was so: though I suppose it is very uncertain.

*Henry.* Uncertain! it is a most undoubted fact.

*Charles.* How do you know it?

*Henry.* By the elegance of the design; by the spirit of the execution; nothing equal to it, was ever produced by the moderns. I was very fortunate in getting so good a bargain; I would have given two thousand pounds rather than have missed it.

*Charles.* Well, well, Henry, you spend your money in antiquities, I spend mine in horses: and we both show our taste by doing so, no doubt.

*Henry.* But Charles, do you tell how Mrs. M— shows her taste and spends her money? I should like to hear an account of her jewels.

*Charles.* Jewels! I do not believe she has any in the world, except her lovely children; which are jewels indeed.

*Henry.* Then I suppose she spends a great deal at the card table.

*Charles.* I never could account for it, but sure I am, she never sits down to a card-table. You never could guess how she spends her money.

*Henry.* Do, tell me.

*Charles.* Some other time, I will explain the whole of it to you. At present I must go to see a beautiful curriole and a pair of horses, that are to be sold by auction; I am afraid I shall miss them. Good morning.

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*For the Belfast Monthly Magazine.*

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STANLEY AND MORLAND....A TALE.

I HAVE often wondered that so noble a feeling as gratitude, and so natural to all degrees of people is so short-lived, however strongly it is felt at first. It is a virtue we have from nature, and is felt by every heart which is not made callous by vice, but it is of little use to us, if not properly directed by reflection. Hence we see the poorer classes of the people who are quite

overpowered with gratitude at the first donation, become less and less obliged at every time they are served, till ultimately they look no longer upon it as an obligation, but as a right. Some sick people who from being continually attended during a long illness, far from being thankful for the attentions of their friends, grow cross and peevish to those who have had so much anxiety about them. Hence children too frequently show so little regard to their parents; and the world, in general, show so little to their Creator, although we all know that every blessing we enjoy comes from him.

Stanley and Morland were school-fellows. Stanley was much older than Morland, and had protected him from the rudeness of other boys; this more than congeniality of sentiment was the beginning of their friendship; disparity of age unfitted them to be otherwise intimate.

They left school and almost forgot each other, when Stanley heard by accident that Morland's estate was to be sold to answer the debts of a banker to whom he had lent his name. The benevolent heart of Stanley felt as keenly for his young friend as if it were himself that suffered, and without a moment's reflection, he wrote to Morland, requesting him to come and live in his family till some more agreeable situation offered.—Morland could not bear the thoughts of being a burden to his friend, and did not without much persuasion consent: at length he came, and found every thing to his satisfaction, a kind friend, a happy family, and a hearty welcome from all; his heart was full of gratitude. Stanley did every thing to make the obligation light to his visitor, and took every trouble to look out for a situation for him.

Years rolled on and Morland began really to feel at home; he became more indifferent about getting an employment; he felt himself happy;—his independent spirit was almost extinguished, he was gradually forgetting the donor. He had already resided eight years with Stanley, when an advantageous situation offered for a young man of respectability. Idleness had become agreeable to Morland, and the springs of action in his mind had